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or marbled, which may extend over the iliac region. Sometimes all the dark markings are marbled with paler. There is a band on the front of the humerus, and the hind limbs are frequently double-banded.

	Lines.
From end of muzzle to canthus oris.....	3.9
“ “ to vent	12
Length of fore limb.....	7.4
“ hind “	18.4
“ “ foot.....	8.6
Interorbital breadth.....	1.8

Like *capistrata*, *palliata*, and the Eastern *pickeringii*, this is one of the smallest species of the genus; in form it is the most distantly removed from the typical forms, approaching distantly *Chorophilus*, which it resembles in color. The lack of a vocal vesicle, not rarely occurring in the genus *Rana*, I have not observed in any other species of this genus.

No. 5293, 19 specimens half ♂, Cape St. Lucas. Jno. Xantus.

November 6th.

MR. VAUX, Vice-President, in the Chair.

Thirty-three members present.

The following were offered for publication :

“Fifth contribution to the Herpetology of Tropical America.” By Ed. D. Cope. “On the Habits of the Agricultural Ant of Texas.” By Gideon C. Lincecum.

Dr. Hayden made some remarks in regard to an extensive chalk deposit on the Missouri river. He also exhibited to the Academy some fossils, fishes and shells, which had been taken from these chalk deposits by Mr. Geo. A. Propper, a resident of Yankton, the capital of Dakota Territory. This formation has been known for many years, and represents No. 3, or Niobrara group of the Cretaceous series of this region. It commences at a point on the Missouri river not far from Blackbird hill, overlapping, on the high hills, Nos. 1 and 2 of the Cretaceous series. Near the mouth of the Vermilion River it begins to occupy the country, to the exclusion of any other rocks, and passes beneath the bed of the Missouri near the Great Bend. It is thus visible for nearly 400 miles along the river. The fossils which have thus far been taken from this bed are not numerous in species. The *Ostrea congesta*, Conrad, is perhaps the most abundant shell. It is found in many localities aggregated in vast masses, reminding one much of the little raccoon oyster that is left by the receding of the tide along the shores of the sea islands of South Carolina.

Inoceramus problematicus is abundant between Blackbird hill and mouth of Big Sioux river. It is found in a grey, rather hard, chalk limestone, which forms the base of the formation No. 3, and the rock is used much by the settlers for building purposes and for burning into lime. *I. pseudomytiloides* and *I. aviculoides* are found at different localities. This rock varies greatly in color as well as texture, from a lead grey to milk white. It is oftener a deep rust color, owing to the presence of the peroxide of iron. It resembles very much our common chalk of commerce, and might be used for similar economical purposes. Although the organic remains thus far found in this formation do not positively affirm it, yet there can be hardly a doubt that it is the American representative of the white chalk beds of Europe. The fish remains are many of them quite well preserved, and as they belong apparently to undescribed species, they are placed in the collections of the Academy for future study.

[Nov.

The deaths were announced of Mr. Francis A. Wolgamuth, a member, and of Dr. Robert W. Gibbes, of Columbia, S. C., correspondent. Also that of Mr. Robert Kennicott, correspondent, which occurred near Behring's Straits.

November 13th.

The President, DR. HAYS, in the Chair.

Thirty-five members present.

The following was offered for publication: "Description of the Hot Springs of Soda Creek, &c." By E. L. Berthoud.

Mr. Isaac Lea read the following letter:

New Garden, 5th of 9th mo., 1866.

ISAAC LEA.

Dear Friend,—As science is the accumulation of facts, and the legitimate inductions derived from them, I offer no further apology for this intrusion.

Our *Helicidae* and other land shells generally pass the day in damp secluded places, among grass, under logs and fallen leaves, and even buried beneath the surface of the earth in dry weather, and are consequently difficult to find. From these retreats they sally forth during the night, enlivened by the falling dew—or still more by a shower of rain—in quest of food and pleasure. But here they are screened from observation by the darkness of the night.

Knowing their habits, and having often found them under boards or other dejected matter, it occurred to me several years ago to make this knowledge available in collecting such shells. My success has been most gratifying to myself—may it not prove equally so to others? The plan which I adopted is this: On a summer evening, after rain, I lay a *wet board* on the *wet grass* anywhere in my yard, lawn, or pasture, and on the following morning find the shells adhering to the under surface. In this way I have at various times obtained the following species in greater or less abundance:—

Succinea avara,	Vallonia minuta,
Hyalina indentata,	Bulimus marginatus,
arborea,	Leucocheila contracta,
Gastrodonta suppressa,	corticaria,
Strobila labyrinthica,	pentodon,
Anguispira alternata,	Isthmia ovata,
Patula striatella,	gouldii,
Helicodiscus lineata,	milium,
Pseudohyalina minuscula,	armifera.

Only a week ago, on removing a small log from my pasture, where it had lain some months, I accidentally detected a few shells of *Isthmia milium*, hitherto unnoticed in this vicinity. The next evening, after rain, I laid three boards, each four feet long and six inches wide, upon the spot, and the next morning obtained 250 *Ist. milium*, 15 *Leuc. pentodon*, 3 *Gast. suppressa*, and 6 *Pseud. minuscula*.

The plan here suggested is susceptible of extensive application to the purposes of the practical conchologist and travelling collector of shells, wherever they may chance to pass the night; especially so, as I have found by repeated trials that a bucket of water thrown on the grass and covered with a board affords all the conditions necessary for success about as well as a shower of rain. No cumbrous apparatus is required to load the traveller; the means will always be at hand wherever he may chance to lodge, and a few moments of the evening and morning will suffice to set his traps and bag the game.

The record of a journey across this wide continent, so conducted, would 1866.]